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UNHCR ACTIVITIES FINANCED BY VOLUNTARY FUNDS: REPORT FOR 1993-1994 AND PROPOSED PROGRAMMES AND BUDGET FOR 1995

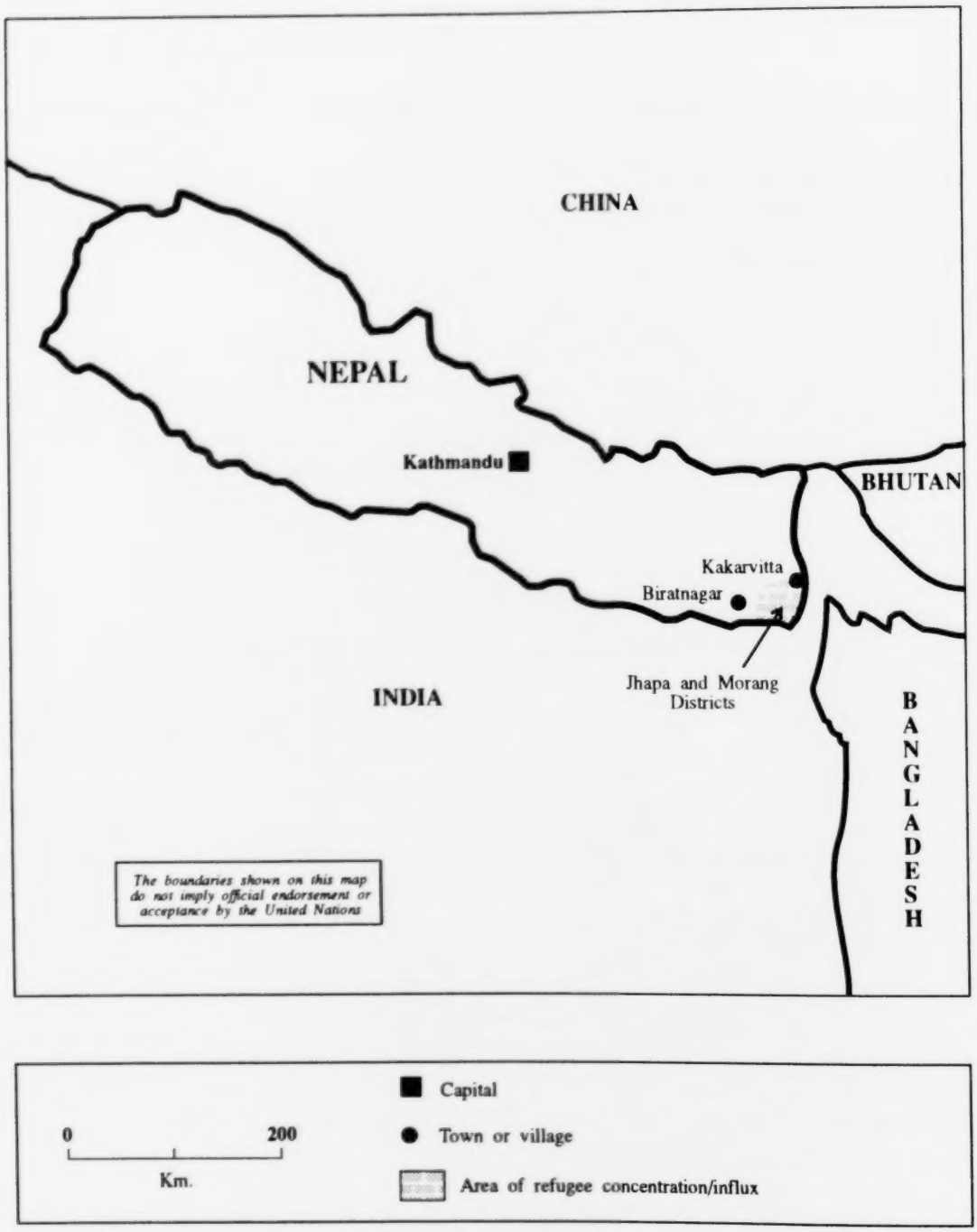
PART II. ASIA AND OCEANIA

Section 8 - Nepal

(submitted by the High Commissioner)

GE.94-03253

NEPAL


CHINA
NEPAL
Kathmandu
BHUTAN
Kakarvitta
Biratnagar
Jhapa and Morang
Districts
INDIA
BANGLADESH
The boundaries shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations
Capital
Town or village
Area of refugee concentration/influx
0
200
Km.

II.8 NEPAL

Country Overview

Characteristics of the refugee population

1. At the end of 1993, there were eight camps in the eastern districts of Jhapa and Morang, housing some 85,000 ethnic Nepalis from Bhutan. The population consisted mostly of family groups, with some 500 female-headed households, usually living near other family members, and virtually no unaccompanied minors, with orphans being cared for by the extended family. Whilst the majority of refugees are farmers with little education, there is also a sizeable percentage of highly educated former professionals in the camps. The statistical profile of 80 new arrivals in May 1994 shows an almost even gender distribution, with over 50 per cent adults and 40 per cent between the ages of five and 17 years. Eleven mandate refugees, mostly single adult males residing in Kathmandu, constitute the rest of the refugee population. In addition 3,697 other refugees were also assisted by the Office as they transited Nepal in the course of the year.

Major developments (1993 and first quarter of 1994)

2. The opening of a Screening Centre at the border crossing between India and Nepal in June 1993 was a decisive factor in limiting the inflow of asylum seekers from Bhutan. The influx fell to some 10,000 persons in the course of the year, as compared with 65,000 the previous year. Over 90 per cent of the 1993 arrivals entered Nepal before June 1993. The relative stabilization of the refugee population allowed the Office to consolidate the physical infrastructure of the camps in the south-east, as well as the procedures for dealing with refugees from other countries.

3. Much attention was focused on bilateral efforts by the Governments of Bhutan and Nepal to resolve the refugee crisis. In July 1993, an agreement was reached on setting up a joint ministerial-level committee. In February 1994 the two parties discussed ways of categorizing the asylum seekers in the camps and in April 1994 a Joint Verification Team was set up with a view to pursuing durable solutions on the basis of mutually acceptable criteria.

Programme objectives and priorities

4. While continuing to provide assistance in the eastern camps, the emphasis of the UNHCR assistance programme will shift from consolidation of the infrastructure to (a) increasing refugee participation and self-management in all sectors of care and maintenance; (b) strengthening the capacity of the authorities who are responsible for law and order in the camps, and for registration; (c) ensuring adequate representation of refugee women in camp committees; and (d) boosting education, vocational training and income-generation that directly benefit children and women. Efforts will be made with the Governments of Bhutan and Nepal to find durable solutions for the four categories already identified in the refugee camps. Simultaneously, additional funding will be sought to assist the Government to implement small development projects in refugee areas.

Arrangements for implementation/related inputs

5. The Home Ministry, through the National Refugee Coordination Unit and the Operations Management and Implementation Unit, coordinates the refugee programme with UNHCR, and is directly responsible for camp management and security. The Lutheran World Service has responsibility for the physical infrastructure in the camps, the Nepal Red Cross Society for the distribution of food and non-food items, Save the Children Fund (UK) for health services and supplementary/therapeutic feeding, OXFAM for income-related activities and non-formal education, CARITAS Nepal for primary and secondary education, and the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation for environmental protection in and around the camps. The Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) manages a portfolio of micro-projects implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Government Departments in refugee-impacted areas. Finally, the Centre for Victims of Torture (CVICT) provides special counselling and medical care to victims of violence.

6. The World Food Programme (WFP) provides basic as well as supplementary food and transport up to extended delivery points. In the 18-month period from January 1994, WFP is planning to make available 25,540 mt of rice, 3,565 mt of pulses, 1,570 mt of vegetable oil, 1,315 mt of sugar, 300 mt of iodized salt and 665 mt of cereal blend at a cost of $ 11,084,590. CARITAS Nepal is covering all the costs of the secondary education programme, while OXFAM, LWS, and CVICT make significant contributions to the projects they manage as operational partners. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is also contributing to projects in refugee affected areas. Besides their overall coordinating function, the Branch Office and Sub-Office are called upon to implement certain aspects of the programme directly such as the procurement of kerosene used as domestic fuel, as well as the dissemination of refugee law among government officials.

General Programmes

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

7. Although the influx from Bhutan was much lower than in the previous year, the congestion in the camps necessitated the development of a new site at Khudnabari, and substantial upgrading of access roads. Problems in the procurement of bamboo and thatch delayed the roofing of refugee shelters in camps. Nutritional deficiencies were noted later in the year which required a review of the diet. An agreement with WFP on introducing blended food was delayed, leading to an increased outlay for fresh vegetables. Two new activities introduced in the second half of the year were kitchen gardens and forest conservation. The refugees' kerosene ration was increased to dissuade refugees from random foraging in the surrounding forests. Increasing concern about the validity of camp registration lists necessitated a large-scale verification exercise with over 300 government and UNHCR personnel being deployed in the camps. The registration system requires further refinement.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

8. Additions to activities already planned for 1994 include the following: revision of the food-basket to include locally-produced blended food provided by WFP; an increase in the budget for appropriate arrangements in treating victims of violence; providing more durable roofing to some 8,000 refugee shelters as part of a general programme of upgrading shelter; the introduction of pilot projects for income-generating activities that will benefit unemployed male youths and adults of both sexes; transfer of responsibility for water supply, sewage and garbage disposal systems to refugee managers; the investigation of cost-efficient energy alternatives compared to kerosene; and training in camp management, emergency management and refugee law for government officials.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

9. Care and maintenance of Bhutanese asylum-seekers in camps will follow the same process initiated in previous years, with special emphasis on the transfer of responsibility for day-to-day operations to refugees. In particular, though the funding level remains approximately the same as in 1994, the programme will be reoriented from rehabilitation and relief activities towards activities such as income-generation, vocational training and education. The capacity of schools at the primary level will be expanded to accommodate 45,000 pupils, from the present level of 30,000.

10. The sectoral breakdown for the initial and revised 1994 and the initial 1995 care and maintenance allocations is as follows (in US dollars):

Sector	Initial 1994	Revised 1994	Initial 1995
Food	110,000	255,031	253,300
Transport/logistics	186,430	547,794	582,833
Domestic needs	1,082,075	951,762	1,252,196
Water	223,100	208,828	161,245
Sanitation	235,335	364,798	233,940
Health/nutrition	709,135	692,194	687,606
Shelter	1,014,085	717,064	191,931
Community services	405,050	415,345	327,987
Education	329,355	375,233	853,290
Crop production	-	13,052	24,690
Livestock	-	-	19,900
Forestry	62,623	167,996	75,410
Income generation	50,270	51,286	266,780
Legal assistance	80,730	99,697	189,915
Agency op. support	644,012	637,820	528,977
Project Personnel	901,100	0	0
Programme delivery costs	0	1,204,600	1,072,800
Total	$ 6,033,300	$ 6,702,500	$ 6,722,800

Special Programmes

Other Trust Funds

11. The Refugee-impacted Areas Rehabilitation Programme (RARP) started in early 1994 with an initial contribution from the Japan Refugee Relief Trust Fund to mitigate the adverse impact on the local economy, environment and general living conditions, of the concentrated presence of a large number of asylum-seekers in two of the most densely-populated districts of Nepal. Encouraged by a positive beginning on the part of CECI, other donors such as Canada, Germany, the British Embassy in Kathmandu, LWS and UNDP have been motivated to contribute to this programme.

Programme Delivery and Administrative Support Costs

(a) **Variations in planned activities in 1993**

12. In 1993, two international staff were employed under temporary assistance to cover protection functions related to the screening operation in the Sub-Office in Jhapa, for periods of seven months and one year respectively. In addition, two local staff, a Protection Assistant and Driver, were also employed under temporary assistance for the last five months of 1993. As a result of these appointments, expenditure under staff costs was higher than expected.

(b) **1994 planned implementation**

13. Revised estimates for 1994 have increased, with additional needs in several chapters corresponding to the increased number of staff, including the creation of additional posts in 1994. The establishment of the Screening Centre at Kakarvitta for new arrivals, involved the creation of the posts of an international Protection Officer with effect from 1 January 1994, and a local General Service Protection Assistant and one Driver as of 1 June 1994. A National Officer post of Programme Officer (Engineering) at the Sub-Office was also approved, as of 1 January 1994, to supervise the substantial shelter and construction activities planned for the year. General operating expenses have been increased for the maintenance of premises in Kathmandu, in particular restoration of a parking area and the erection of a security wall.

15. The acquisition of additional computer equipment will provide for one complete station for each functional unit both at the Branch Office and Sub-Office. The telephone system of the Sub-Office is also being improved with standard exchange equipment. Consequently, an upward revision for the acquisition of permanent equipment was also necessary.

(c) **1995 programme proposals**

16. The overall budget level proposed for 1995 is lower than in the previous two years. Due to completion of major construction works and streamlining of arrangements for routine operating and maintenance activities in the Bhutanese camps, it has been decided to reduce staff at Sub-Office Jhapa by one

international Field Officer, and two local General Service staff with effect from 31 December 1994, as a result of which the initial 1995 estimates under staff costs are lower.

17. Under general operating expenses, the requirements are marginally higher. Costs for maintenance of premises will need to be increased due to the annual increment in custodial costs for office premises. Provision is also made for the replacement of one vehicle for the Sub-Office, and the Representative's vehicle, which was procured in 1989.

UNHCR EXPENDITURE IN NEPAL

(in thousands of United States dollars)

1993	1994		1995	
AMOUNT OBLIGATED	ALLOCATION APPROVED BY 1993 EXCOM	PROPOSED REVISED ALLOCATION	SOURCE OF FUNDS AND TYPE OF ASSISTANCE	PROPOSED ALLOCATION/ PROJECTION
GENERAL PROGRAMMES (1)				
7,751.0	6,033.3	5,497.9	CARE AND MAINTENANCE	5,650.0
23.2 a/	–	–	LOCAL SETTLEMENT	–
1.6 a/	–	–	RESETTLEMENT	–
–	–	1,204.6	PROGRAMME DELIVERY See Annexes I a and II a	1,072.8
7,775.8	**6,033.3**	**6,702.5**	**SUB–TOTAL OPERATIONS**	**6,722.8**
232.1	164.5	135.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT See Annexes I b and II b	132.2
8,007.9	**6,197.8**	**6,837.5**	**T O T A L (1)**	**6,855.0**
SPECIAL PROGRAMMES (2)				
40.3	–	196.9	OTHER TRUST FUNDS	–
101.2	–	83.0	ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT Junior Professional Officer	83.0
141.5	**0.0**	**279.9**	**T O T A L (2)**	**83.0**
8,149.4	**6,197.8**	**7,117.4**	**GRAND TOTAL (1+2)**	**6,938.0**

a/ obligation incurred against Overall Allocation